



# Media Fairness Initiative

## A Look at Bias in the News

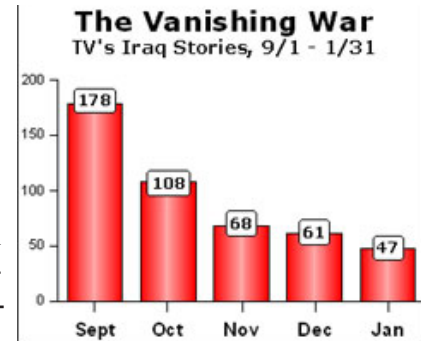


### Media Downplay Progress in Iraq 2/7/08

As U.S. troops succeed in bringing increased safety and security to Iraq, the television networks have fewer stories reporting on it, according to a Media Research Center (MRC) survey.

MRC analyzed all news coverage of the Iraq war on the three network evening newscasts from September 1-January 31. **The results showed a steady drop in the number of stories about Iraq as the situation there improved.** In September, the evening newscasts broadcast a total of 178 stories about the war. **By January, that number fell to just 47, a decrease of nearly 75 percent.**

According to U.S. military figures, 75 percent of areas in Baghdad are now secure, compared to just 8 percent prior to the surge in U.S. troops in Iraq.



### Reporters Admit to Obama Bias

NBC political director Chuck Todd admitted this week that it can be difficult to objectively cover Sen. Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

In his campaign blog, Todd wrote: **"Covering him, it almost feels like that magically unreal time in the few days leading up to his Iowa win** and when he road [sic] that victory into New Hampshire. The candidate was swept up in an air of inevitability, **generating a palpable buzz that even thrilled the reporters who reported on him on a daily basis ...** Ironically, reporting on Obama everyday, traveling on the same plane that he does, being driven to events on a press bus as part of his motorcade **leaves the reporters following him the poorest judges of what the sentiment of voters' really are."**

Last month, NBC reporter Lee Cowan voiced similar thoughts while reporting backstage at an Obama event in New Hampshire: **"From a reporter's point of view it's almost hard to remain objective** because it's infectious, the energy, I think. **It sort of goes against your core to say that as a reporter,** but the crowds have gotten so much bigger, his energy has gotten stronger."

### Pick the Quote

Two of the statements below came from members of the national media, while just one came from a presidential campaign spokesperson. Can you pick the quote from the spokesperson?

- A. "If he [Obama] wins tonight, that's the shot heard 'round the world ... I think the world will be very happy to hear this."
- B. "When you talk to Iowa voters who come to hear Obama, you get the sense they know they might be part of something big here, something historic."
- C. "When the people get to know Barack Obama, they often become more comfortable with him as a candidate ..."



Answer: C